

media release

Colorado Department of Agriculture

www.colorado.gov/ag

www.facebook.com/coloradoag

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 6, 2014

Contacts:

Veterinarians and Livestock Owners: State Veterinarian's Office, [\(303\) 869-9130](tel:3038699130)

Media: Christi Lightcap, [\(303\) 869-9005](tel:3038699005), Christi.Lightcap@state.co.us

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Update: 69 Colorado Quarantines

Guidelines for Livestock Shows, Fairs, Exhibitions, and Events

BROOMFIELD, Colo. – The Colorado Department of Agriculture's State Veterinarian's Office has placed 69 locations under quarantine after horses and one cow tested positive for Vesicular Stomatitis (VS). The quarantines are located in Adams, Boulder, Douglas, El Paso, Larimer, and Weld counties; results on additional tests in these and other counties are pending. VS can be painful for animals and costly to their owners. The virus typically causes oral blisters and sores that can be painful causing difficulty in eating and drinking.

"Most confirmed cases are in horses but the risk to cattle is significant as well," said State Veterinarian, Dr. Keith Roehr. "A cow that's part of a herd of three head in Weld County tested positive for VS; cattle owners need to remain vigilant in their insect control efforts."

County totals are:

Adams County – 3 horses on 2 premises

Boulder County - 26 horses on 15 premises

Douglas County – 2 horses on 1 premises

El Paso County – 1 horse on 1 premises
Larimer County – 9 horses on 4 premises
Weld County – 25 horses and 1 cow on 19 premises

For a map of Colorado counties with confirmed cases, visit
http://www.aphis.usda.gov/animal_health/downloads/animal_diseases/vsv/CumulativeOverview_EXTERNAL_8x11_port_VSV2014_073014.pdf.

“Over the past two weeks, our office has been receiving approximately ten reports daily of animals demonstrating clinical signs that are consistent with VS. Veterinarians have been very observant and diligent to report horses and other livestock that are suspicious of being infected,” said State Veterinarian, Dr. Keith Roehr. “Livestock, including horse and cattle owners, should be aware that insect control is an important tool in the prevention of VS. Most of the cases we have investigated involve horses that have had no history of movement; therefore, controlling black flies and midges are very important in the prevention of the spread of disease.”

Veterinarians and livestock owners who suspect an animal may have VS or any other vesicular disease should immediately contact State or federal animal health authorities. Livestock with clinical signs of VS are isolated until they are healed and determined to be of no further threat for disease spread. There are no USDA approved vaccines for VS.

While rare, human cases of VS can occur, usually among those who handle infected animals. VS in humans can cause flu-like symptoms and only rarely includes lesions or blisters.

Vesicular Stomatitis (VS) Signs and Transmission:

VS susceptible species include horses, mules, cattle, bison, sheep, goats, pigs, and camelids. The clinical signs of the disease include vesicles, erosions and sloughing of the skin on the muzzle, tongue, teats and above the hooves of susceptible livestock. Vesicles are usually only seen early in the course of the disease. The transmission of vesicular stomatitis is not completely understood but components include insect vectors, mechanical transmission, and livestock movement.

“The State Veterinarian’s Office is not recommending that livestock shows be cancelled. Instead, it is more important to consider certificates of veterinary inspection prior to or on site observations at entry into events and then insect control measures during before during and after events occur,” said Roehr. “If event organizers have questions, they can contact our office.”

Tips for Event Organizers and Livestock Owners:

- Strict fly control is an important factor to inhibit the transmission of the disease.
- Avoid transferring feeding equipment, cleaning tools or health care equipment from other herds.
- Colorado veterinarians and livestock owners should contact the state of destination when moving livestock interstate to ensure that all import requirements are met. A list of contact information for all state veterinarians’ offices is available at www.colorado.gov/ag/animals and click on "Import Requirements."
- Colorado fairs, livestock exhibitions, and rodeos may institute new entry requirements based on the extent and severity of the current VS outbreak. Certificates of Veterinary Inspection issued within 2-5 days prior to an event can be beneficial to reduce risks. Be sure to stay informed of any new livestock event requirements.
- During an event, important VS disease prevention procedures include minimizing the sharing of water and feed/equipment, applying insect repellent daily (especially to the animals ears), and closely observing animals for signs of VS.
- If moving livestock internationally please contact the USDA APHIS VS Colorado office at [303-231-5385](tel:303-231-5385) to determine if there are any movement restrictions or testing requirements for VSV.

Important Points for Veterinarians:

- Any vesicular disease of livestock is reportable to the State Veterinarian’s Office in Colorado – to report call [303-869-9130](tel:303-869-9130). If after-hours, call the same number to obtain the phone number of the staff veterinarian on call.
- Since VS is considered a foreign animal disease, any case with clinical signs consistent with VS will warrant an investigation by a state or federal foreign animal disease diagnostician (FADD).
- When VS is suspected, the FADD will gather the epidemiological information, take the necessary blood samples, collect the necessary fluid or tissue from the lesions, and inform the owners and the referring veterinarian as to necessary bio-security and movement restrictions

For additional information, contact the Colorado State Veterinarian’s Office at [303-869-9130](tel:303-869-9130) or to view the current location of cases and other important updates and information you can visit: <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/wps/portal/aphis/ourfocus/animalhealth?1dmy&urile=wcm%3a>

[path%3a%2Faphis_content_library%2Fsa_our_focus%2Fsa_animal_health%2Fsa_animal_disease_information%2Fsa_equine_health%2Fsa_vesicular_stomatitis%2Fct_vesicular_stomatitis.](#)

###